

2009 JCEP Team Award Application

Team Members' Names, Positions, Program Areas, Associations:

Annette Bjorklund, Interim 4-H Youth Development Educator, Barron County
4-H Youth Development; WAE4-HYDP

Kristin Bruder, Family Living Educator, Dunn County
Family Living; WEAFCS and ESP

Joan Sprain, Family Living Educator, St. Croix County
Family Living; WEAFCS

Dianne Weber, Family Living Educator, Washburn County
Family Living; WEAFCS and ESP

Lori Zierl, Family Living Educator, Pierce County
Family Living; WEAFCS and ESP

Educational Program Name: Are You Ready? The College Transition

Nominator's Name:

Joan Wimme, Community Youth Development Educator, UWEX-Douglas County

Nominator's Phone: 715.395.1363

Who will accept the award at the All Associations Luncheon on April 1st if chosen?

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SUPPORTING STATEMENT

NEEDS, AUDIENCE, AND SITUATION

According to Dr. Richard Kadison, Harvard University Chief of Mental Health Services, a student in college has the chance of almost one in two that he/she will become depressed, one in two that he/she will binge drink regularly; and one in ten that he/she will seriously consider suicide.

To gain insight into the problem locally, the team contracted with the UW-River Falls Survey Research Center to conduct focus groups with students, parents, and faculty/staff at UW-River Falls and UW-Barron County. Findings confirmed sources of stress, lack of preparedness for how demanding college would be, and no dominant source for information on the transition to college.

The college Transition Team created a multifarious curriculum to meet these needs. The objectives are to help students and parents/caregivers:

- Recognize and manage the normal emotions and conflicts that result from this major transition.
- Increase communication and problem-solving skills.
- Create a plan for students to utilize when faced with specific issues, conflicts or crises.

ROLE OF EACH TEAM MEMBER

Project responsibilities were divided among team members based on expertise and when they joined the team. All team members contributed to creation of the curriculum and were part of teaching teams for pilot workshops.

Lori Zierl: team coordinator, grant manager, curriculum development (academics/finances), lead for evaluation, research at UW-River Falls.

Dianne Weber: grant proposal, curriculum development (relationships), lead for two-hour version, editing, communication.

Annette Bjorklund: grant proposal, curriculum development (healthy choices), lead for video, design and layout, focus groups at UW-Barron County, website maintenance.

Joan Sprain: curriculum development (relationships), lead for video clips for parent sessions.

Kristen Bruder: curriculum development (healthy choices), posted video on YouTube.

PARTNERSHIPS

Partners included UW-Barron County, UW-River Falls, and UW-Superior (DVD). UW-Extension Publications Unit provided curriculum packaging and distribution and series of media releases. This project received a UW-Extension Program Innovation Fund Grant, and additional funding from River Falls Partnership for Youth. Reviewers were five Extension Specialists from four states.

OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

To date, 44 students and 45 adults have completed two or more sessions of the three-session workshop in the four team counties. Of those, 36 students and 32 adults completed a post-session retrospective evaluation. Parents and students who “discuss the transition to college” rose from 56% before the workshop to 95% after. The evaluation showed a significant increase in confidence in students’ ability to handle academic challenges, manage a spending plan, develop and maintain good relationships, and make healthy choices. Ninety-one percent of parents reported making plans with their student to address potential challenges.

A follow-up evaluation was implemented after first semester; nine students and 14 parents responded. Eighty-nine percent of students (8 of 9) were able to describe a challenge they faced and how the workshop helped them. One student responded: “It helped me deal with the situation of behavior and drinking among all the roommates. I also sought help from my family as to how to handle the situation.” Another said, “I looked back over the handouts and talked myself through it!” Eighty-nine percent of students (8 of 9) responded that the workshop was a useful or extremely useful source of information related to their preparation for the transition to college. Seventy-nine percent of parents (11 of 14) rated the workshop series extremely useful or useful. All respondents agreed they would recommend this workshop to others.

The College Transition program is being implemented in other counties in Wisconsin and in other states.

SHARING

A copy of the curriculum was provided to each county UW-Extension Office. The team has presented at five state, one regional and five national conferences. Additional presentations are planned.

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

Curriculum User Guide
Fact Sheet
Feature Story

To view the curriculum, contact a county 4-H Youth Development or Family Living Educator. Information is also available at

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/washburn/4h/CollegeTransition.html>